

A Study on the Level of Self-Esteem among Children with Learning Disability

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to assess self-esteem as a psychological correlate of learning disability among children: scope of psychological interventions. It was hypothesized that LD children have low self-esteem. Children with average and above average IQ but with learning difficulty, Children who are physically healthy and active in other co-curricular activities, Children who are going for remedial classes for subject wise Learning difficulty were included. And children with various types of Learning disability like dyslexia (both reading comprehension and writing), dyscalculia and dysgraphia were included for the study. Persons with disabilities often suffer from how others react to them and this contributes to diminishing their self-esteem and to a tendency to take little care of them, which may subsequently hinder social inclusion. These two social exclusion factors are mutually aggravating. There are four components that define the esteem you might feel for yourself: self-confidence, identity, feeling of belonging, and feeling of competence. **Research design:** The researcher followed descriptive research design for the study. **Universe of the study:** The universe of the present study is contact from Kottayam district. **Sampling:** There searcher took the sampling of 60 respondents had learning disability. This study conclude (50%) of the respondents were having moderate level of self-esteem, (27%) of the respondents were having poor level of self esteem and (23%) of the respondents were having high level of self esteem.

KEYWORDS: Self-esteem, Children, Learning disability

INTRODUCTION

In the modern society mastery of basic academic skills-reading, writing and arithmetic is a necessary pre-requisite for success in both school and employment setting and in society at large. A large percentage of children suffer from learning disabilities or learning difficulties and therefore do not master or partially master-these required academic skills. The term 'learning difficulty' has been applied to those children who have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of their age. They are unable to make use of the education facilities available in schools. People with learning difficulties can have problems with many every day learning activities. Reading, spelling and numeracy skills are basic to school achievement. Children with specific learning difficulties may show problems in

all three areas or only one or two. Reading and spelling are closely associated skills and it is rare to find reading – disabled children who are not at all handicapped in spelling. Most children are likely to be behind in all three areas, although there are occasional reports of sub groups showing rather more of one or the other deficit. Problems in self-regulatory behaviours, social perception and social interaction may exist with learning disabilities but do not by themselves constitute a learning disability. Although learning disabilities may occur concomitantly with other handicapping conditions (for example sensory impairment, mental retardation, serious emotional disturbance) or with extrinsic influences such as cultural differences, insufficient or inappropriate instruction, they are not the result of these conditions

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or influences, Children whose overall level of intellectual development is normal but who nevertheless have specific difficulty with some particular task, such as reading. On assessment, children with specific learning difficulties usually have a performance profile in which there is a marked difference between their level of achievement in their area of specific difficulty and their levels of achievement in other areas of cognitive functioning. Because of this, such children are often said to show a discrepancy between their achievement and their aptitude in the area of difficulty. Learning difficulties not only present problems in coping with academic requirement but has serious repercussions.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Elementary school year set the tone for developing the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary for children to become healthy, competent and confident learners. Learning disabled children are those children suffer from serious learning disabilities. These children exhibit exceptionally inferior qualities and capacities in terms of learning and understanding in comparison to the normal children of their age. In fact, learning disability is nothing but a sort of helplessness that can be felt by the sufferer in terms of his academic performance in the same way as experienced by the physically handicapped person in terms of his physical functioning or mentally handicapped in terms of his mental functioning.

Now a day's learning disability has been largely identified as one of the main reasons for educational backwardness in school going children. Below average performance of these children in the school robs them off their self-confidence even to the extent of not being able to develop a good self-concept. Such children grow up to become individuals with no identity of their own. Learning disability and backwardness in studies are the problems faced by these children. Through this study the researcher intends to find out the self-esteem in children with learning disability.

SCOPE OF STUDY

Learning disability refers to certain kinds of disorders in the basic psychological processes of an individual. These disorders are mainly caused by the intrinsic factors like central nervous system dysfunction, specific deficit information processing or the ability to learn. Although one or the other learning problems may be caused by extrinsic factors like mental retardation, sensory impairment, emotional disturbance, cultural differences, Disorders associated with learning disability are usually manifested into some specific severe learning problems confined to

one or two cognitive areas like ability to grasp or understand the things, difficulty in language, reading or difficulty in mathematical or social skills. The learning disability may allow the individual to have intelligence scores within the normal range but it essentially makes them substantially delayed in academic achievement. He always lags behind in terms of his age and class. The study will be helpful to identify the method or systematic intervention for improve the self-esteem of the children with learning disability. It will help them identity their own limitations and potentials and improve up on their limitations and develop their potentials. Thus, we can scaffold them in their areas of interest and achieve success in life without demoralizing them as worthless in the society.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Bakker and Bosman (2003) explored the well-being of children who attended schools for special education in the Netherlands, arguing against the potentially negative consequences of inclusive education in public schools. Finding that "the self-esteem of children with learning disabilities does not benefit from regular education attendance" (Bakker & Bosman, 2003, the authors firmly concluded that the higher self-image of students in the special education schools "warrants heightened attention".

Kelly and Norwich (2004) also found, through qualitative research, that children with moderate LD in special schools reported more positive self-perceptions of their educational abilities. Overall, these three distinctive investigations are in agreement and lend additional support to the notion that students with LD in special schools exhibit positive outcomes with regard to self-concept.

In 2007, the LD Resources website listed over 260 independent kindergartens through grade 12 schools with LD support programs in the United States, not including learning centers, reading clinics, or tutors. However, to date a limited number of investigators have chosen to focus on this population. The current investigation was an attempt to extend the findings of prior research with adolescents who attend private schools for students with LD outside of the United States (Bakker & Bosman, 2003; Butler & Marinov-Glassman, 1994; Forman, 1988; Kelly & Norwich, 2004) by investigating a sample of students in the United States.

Methodology of the Study

General Objective: -

To Study the level of self-esteem among children with learning disability

Specific Objectives: -

To study the sense of belonging among the children with learning disability

To study the sense of power among children with learning disability

To study the socialization pattern of children with learning disability

Research design: The researcher followed descriptive research design for the study.

Universe of the study: The universe of the present study is contact from Kottayam district.

Sampling: There searcher took the sampling of 60 respondents had learning disability. The researcher has selected Non Probability sampling purposive sampling methods.

Finds of the Study

| S.NO | FACTORS | MEDIUM | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE (%) |
|------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1 | Age | 10yrs - 12yrs | 34 | 56 |
| 2 | Gender | Male | 37 | 61 |
| 3 | Educational qualification | 5 th - 7 th | 39 | 65 |
| 5 | Religion | Christian | 30 | 50 |
| 6 | Number of siblings | 1-3 | 60 | 100 |
| 7 | Occupation of Father | Business | 36 | 60 |
| 8 | Type of family | Nuclear family | 60 | 100 |
| 9 | Social class | Middle class | 49 | 81 |

Simple Percentage Analysis

- Most of the respondents (56%) were between the age group of 10-12 years.
- Majority of the respondents (61%) were male.
- Most of the respondents (65 %) have under 5-7 category.
- Most of the respondents (50%) belong to the Christian community.
- All of the respondents (100%) were having 1 - 3 siblings.
- Most of the respondent's (60%) guardian occupation considered as businessmen.
- All of the respondents (100%) were from nuclear families.
- Majority of the respondents (81%) were from middle class.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS BY LEVEL OF SELF ESTEEM

| S. No | Level of Self esteem | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Good | 14 | 23 |
| 2 | Moderate | 30 | 50 |
| 3 | Poor | 16 | 27 |
| TOTAL | | 60 | 100 |

INTERPRETATION

The above table shows that (50%) of the respondents were having moderate level of self esteem, (27%) of the respondents were having poor level of self esteem and (23%) of the respondents were having high level of self esteem.

INFLUENCE OF SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC DATA ON SELF-ESTEEM

| Variables | Statistical tool | Value | Result |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Age & Level of self-esteem | T-test | $P = .022 < 0.05$ | Significant |
| Class & Level of self-esteem | T-test | $P = .030 < 0.05$ | Significant |
| Gender & Level of self-esteem | T-test | $P = 1.50 > 0.05$ | Not Significant |
| Age & Level of self-esteem | ANOVA | $P = .832 > 0.05$ | Not Significant |

INTERPRETATION

There is significant difference in age & level of self-esteem of the respondents.

There is significant difference in class & level of self-esteem of the students.

There is no significant difference in gender & level of self-esteem of the students.

There is no significant difference in Age & Level of self-esteem of the respondents.

SUGGESTIONS

- Special attention must be given to children with learning disability.
- New policies to help children with learning disabilities must be implemented by school authorities.
- Teachers should be given training in teaching learning disabled children and giving individual attention to them.
- School should have an in house school counselor, psychologist or school social worker to help students to deal with their self - esteem problems.
- Teacher parent interaction in the school should be improved so that the parents can know their children's needs as well as development during shorter intervals.
- Relaxation with regard to syllabus, giving marks, number of questions to be answered etc. by learning disabled children should be given by the school.
- Avoid disparity and encourage cooperation and mingling among students.

CONCLUSION

The study is to find out the level of self-esteem among children with learning disability. Researcher took a small sample size for the research, the sample size may expand it will good for the study and get a good result as well as the study samples get improvements in their self-esteem. More studies are recommended to identify any problem or stress to the child. The study also helps to identify the different aptitudes of the child. This study have done with the support of the school, students and teachers to become aware of the seriousness of the problem of learning disability and how it can affect the self – esteem in such a tender age. The study will be very much helpful to identify the method or systematic intervention for improve the self-esteem of the children with learning disability. It will help them identity their own limitations and potentials and improve up on their limitations and develop their potentials.

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